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Definitions, objectives, and concepts of in-service development programs in student personnel work are discussed. A structured, in-service development program provides: (1) continuity for constantly changing staff; (2) enhances orientation and upgrading of new staff; (3) increases staff morale through shared responsibility. (4) encourages original, creative staff contributions to the student life program. (5) integrates important changes smoothly (such as new policies, regulations, emphasis on special, timely topics); (6) provides desirable alternatives to administrative directives. encourages staff leadership in on-going personnel programs; (8) increases staff action in basic program operations; (9) raises the aspirational levels of student assistants and staff members; and (10) forms an integral part of good student personnel administration. A separate speech concerning contributions of other professions (specifically social work) to the training of student personnel workers stresses the necessity of self-awareness in the helping person and the teaching of helping skills. (WR)

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FACTORS UNDERLYING THE NEED FOR IN-SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN STUDENT PERSONNEL WORK

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INTRODUCTION

The "years ahead" which caused great concern and much comment on the part of student personnel administrators and other college officials five years ago are here. The predictions made about the years in which World War II babies would arrive on college campuses have been realized and exceeded. This has resulted in greatly increased student enrollment, large residential populations, and extremely complex campus cultures, with conflicting challenges made on staff members and students. One fact stands out above all--that institutions are rapidly becoming cities of students far beyond the predictions made several years ago.

Many approaches have been utilized in attempts to find solutions to these problems. Public support of education is at an all-time high, and state and federal governments have begun to participate in partnership with institutions of higher education. The fact remains, however, that much still needs to be done if students are to receive a "space age education." This involves some academic disciplines that were not even in the curriculum ten years ago. It also dictates the acquisition of experiences which will serve as a basis for problem solving in a complex society.

Much of the responsibility for effectively assisting students in their acclimation and progression through the college years rests with the student personnel service areas. This is achieved through a variety of ways including working with student organizations, residence halls and other housing programs, counseling centers (personal-social and academic) and, of course, in working individually with large numbers of students each year.

One effective method that may be utilized to cut across the vastness of many colleges is the creation or improvement of in-service development programs. These programs are designed to broaden the ratio of resource persons available to students who need leadership and other assistance in the educational process.

Definition of In-service Development. In-service development includes all activities engaged in by the personnel worker to improve the skills, techniques and knowledge which will enable him to become an effective agent of education. This might include a combination of pre-school or in-school workshops, formal courses, weekly or semi-weekly staff meetings, discussions between student leaders and staff members, professional seminars, and attendance at national and state professional conferences.

Objectives of In-service Development. Regardless of methods and organizational structures utilized, all student personnel in-service development programs should direct their energies toward four major objectives.

1. Teach the philosophy and objectives of the institution.
2. Teach each individual the responsibility of his position.
3. Teach each individual the skills and techniques for the effective fulfillment of his responsibility.
4. Stimulate each individual to assume higher standards of responsibility commensurate with his ability and experiences.

The in-service development program should be organized in such a manner that staff members can provide effective leadership at the student contact levels. The success of the program can be evaluated by the degree to which the student assumes responsibility, learns to make decisions, and increases his ability to work in team efforts toward common goals.

In-service development, in the final analysis, has as its major function the professional upgrading of staff members. A planned, organized program of in-service development is a collective means of increasing the effectiveness of each staff member individually. The nature and extent of an in-service development program will vary widely from institution to institution. However, regardless of size, location, type or historical development of the student personnel program, the need for a planned in-service development program exists to some degree in all institutions.

Concepts upon which In-service Development Programs are based. A number of involved and interrelated problems combine to present awesome challenges to

college administrators in general and specifically to student personnel administrators. These general transcending concepts underlie the need for in-service development programs. They deserve special attention not only because of their importance but because all other specific concepts are reflections of these considerations. Proper attention should be given to these when evaluating more specific rationale upon which in-service development programs are based.

The broadening socio-economic range of students and the increased complexity of society caused by population explosions and the explosion of knowledge have created conditions which impede the task of institutions of higher education. The importance of higher education and the increased and wider avenues for financing college educations have broadened the socio-economic base to the point that all qualified persons have an opportunity to attend some institution of higher education. This greater breadth and diversity in the socio-economic levels of those attending college has also increased the problem, affected the motivational patterns, and diversified the value system of student populations. While this is a great challenge for the academic aspect of higher education, it poses an even greater challenge for the non-academic aspects, especially for those institutions which are in fact large residential cities of students.

As the enrollments get larger, communications tend to break down and methods by which communications can be facilitated become increasingly more difficult to devise. The sheer increase in numbers of students has caused extreme fragmentation in all phases of college campus life. Academic diffusion, as a result of the knowledge explosion, is taking place at such a rate that it would take a student enrolled full time over one hundred and twenty-five years to complete all courses offered at some institutions. This impact of knowledge to be taught has greatly proliferated the academic organizational structure by the creation of new colleges and departments, and the expansion of existing areas. This has been characterized further by the development of sub-cultures within the college community, each with its own value system. Examples of such

groups are: residence halls, fraternities, student government, student newspapers, honor-college groups, married students, athletes, political groups, graduate students, regional and ethnic groups, and off-campus student groups. These diverse groups and the lack of effective communication systems reinforce the diffused aspects of college life. Not only have non-academic and academic pressures increased greatly in the last five years but also large residential populations have created additional pressures which have caused tremendous stresses of a personal, social, and emotional nature.

It is within the above framework that the other considerations of in-service development have their meaning. Below are ten specific factors which underly planned in-service development programs for student personnel workers.

1. <u>A structured in-service development program is necessary to provide the continuity for a constantly-changing staff</u>. Due to the rapid expansion of the college population, new positions are being constantly created at all levels. This provides opportunities for promotions within the staff ranks and also new staff members must be recruited. In-service development programs assist greatly in providing continuity of the program both for the new staff members and the staff member who might have recently changed positions. In-service development provides the opportunity for these staff members to reach their peak of effectiveness in the minimum amount of time.

Many institutions are faced each year with the increasingly difficult problem of staffing residence halls. Many of these persons recruited stay only two, three or, at most, four years before they receive their doctor's or master's degrees. However, while carrying out the responsibilities of the hall position, they must learn to work with students with a minimum margin of error. This involves constant orientation and in-service development. This is one example of personnel staffing and development problems, but there are others--counseling, placement, financial aids, foreign student advisement, etc.

2. The fact that new staff members rarely assume their positions at their peak of effectiveness requires the establishment of in-service development programs. New workers arrive on the job with varying work experience, professional know-how, and personal motivation. This is due to the fact that most of the workers entering this field are entering at the lower levels, usually fresh from some phase of the graduate program. The lack of quality internship programs has added to the necessity for providing means of helping these persons increase their effectiveness in the shortest possible time. All institutions have some form of in-service development, planned or unplanned. The new worker learns from others at his level with more experience or from his immediate superior on an individual basis. While individual attention is desirable, as the staff grows it will become a necessity to use a programmed in-service development as a means to provide professional upgrading for all workers with minimum time and effort.

3. Research and experience indicate that staff morale is greatly increased when personnel workers think together and plan together, and when each person shares responsibility for the outcome of the total group's decisions. In-service development programs provide for the student personnel staff the same role that the student personnel program has in the total educational mission of the college. The in-service development program should also provide a basis by which each of the separate student personnel areas can most effectively contribute to this common role. The lack of this common endeavor tends to fragment the administrative and service approach to the student who, in his total integrative learning process, is not concerned with how the college is organized. The fact that all staff members participate in the formulation of the program and discuss means of carrying out this program has great psychological advantages for follow-through and identification with the successes and failures of the program.

4. In-service development programs provide excellent opportunities for each

personnel worker to contribute his originality and creativity to the student life program. Tremendous growth is taking place in all professions; this is especially true in relatively young professions such as student personnel work. It has been said that student personnel work is the implementation and the integration of various disciplines such as psychology, sociology, social psychology, philosophy, and anthropology. Persons enter the student personnel field with varying interests and training in these disciplines. Because the nature of the task of working with student programs and with students individually is so diversified, the full potential of all workers and their disciplines must be utilized. The originality and creativity of each student personnel worker becomes more important because there is no one accepted method of organizing or administering a student personnel program. This is pointed out rather well by the inability of the persons with great experience in the profession to agree upon the academic preparation or experience necessary for student personnel work. The student personnel program should encompass the individual and collective contributions of all persons who have ever been in the program at that institution. In-service development should provide methods by which the creativity of individual staff members can be fed back into the ongoing program.

5. The in-service development program is indispensable in integrating changes such as new policies, regulations, new emphasis of topics of special and timely interest to students, etc. The impact of a complex society in a constantly changing world is felt more each year on college campuses. One of the major tests of these institutions is that of trying to devise methods of helping students to prepare themselves in such a way that they will be able to meet the demands expected of them as college graduates. Student personnel staffs bear the great responsibility of providing leadership in devising means for staff and student discussions, and for acquiring resource people so that the current national and international issues and events can be discussed. One place where current topics can be discussed by staff as well as student leaders is in the in-service development programs. Because of the importance of the current

developments of a national and international nature and their effect on students, time should be allocated in the in-service program to specifically discuss appropriate and timely topics.

Growth of institutions, development of new programs, policies of national organizations, and changes in college policies which result from local factors make it necessary to make periodic changes in administrative policy. These policy changes and the rationale for them must be effectively communicated to the staff and student leaders in their fullest context before adequate understanding and some degree of acceptance can be expected. Examples of this type of policy changes or re-emphasis include traffic regulations, legal aspects of student personnel work--especially student conduct--in loco parentis, social issues, college-community relations, and many others.

6. <u>In-service development programs serve as a desirable alternative to administrative directives.</u> The caliber of student personnel programs is based upon the contribution of every staff member. The degree of contribution by each staff member varies according to knowledge and experience; great differences exist within personnel staffs with regard to individual contributions. The professional growth of a student personnel worker, and thereby the contribution he can make to the program, can be augmented by a program of in-service development where the experience and professional proficiency of more productive members of the staff are available to him in a planned give-and-take manner. The true contribution of a student personnel worker is determined by whether or not he assumes greater responsibility as he acquires the ability and experience to do so. Only by each individual staff member contributing his maximum potential to the program and, consequently, to each young staff member can the program operate at an increasingly more effective level.

7. <u>The primary purpose of an in-service development program is to devise means for the staff to demonstrate leadership ability in the ongoing personnel program rather than handle situations which could be prevented by positive action.</u> The primary concern of a student personnel program is to provide opportunities

for students to engage in classroom and non-classroom activities. This demands planning on the part of the personnel staff. This planning must serve as an educational framework as well as an organizational structure in order that the activities will be given some order and direction. In-service development programs provide a means where the staff can have a common approach to the objectives they wish to obtain in student programs as well as a common approach to the means by which this program will be carried out. It is important that all personnel workers be given preparation to carry out the responsibility that is commensurate with their positions in the program. Each worker should be expected to learn to make decisions commensurate with his position but within the philosophy of the total student personnel program. With this as an operating frame of reference and with experience on the part of the personnel worker in terms of upgrading his ability to carry out his responsibility, more effective programs will emerge.

Authoritative directives are not a good substitute for positive action by staff members and student leaders. Daily leadership on the part of all who have responsibility, working within the framework of the ongoing personnel program, is the best insurance against ineffective planning and projection.

8. In-service development of a scope which is broader than the ongoing personnel program has proved to have great influence upon the staff members' action in the basic program operation. Student personnel work as a profession has been criticized because most of the work in the student personnel area is procedurally oriented and not educational in nature. Professional seminars, an important part of the in-service development program, can provide a means by which this criticism can be partially overcome because it provides a means for a broad scope of information to be made available to staff workers which will improve the quality of their individual work. The experiences which students have in their campus culture are as akin to adult experiences as their curriculum is to their chosen professions. It is necessary that leadership be assumed by student personnel workers in providing means that would be helpful in

assisting students to keep their present abilities and interests in perspective with their future goals. This is extremely important since students have very little experience or other basis upon which to project realistically into the future.

9. <u>One important outcome of the in-service development program is that of raising the aspirational level of the student assistants and staff members</u>. Staff members who are professionally oriented are constantly challenged and motivated by their experiences to achieve more effective ways of carrying out their daily responsibilities. This motivation may come from attending national and state conventions or in-service development programs on the campus. When the student personnel worker is able to put into practice the knowledge that he has acquired, this new experience is usually accompanied by a self-satisfying, well-done attitude. This raises the aspirational level of the personnel worker to constantly improve himself so that this acquired knowledge will make his experiences more meaningful to himself and prove beneficial to the program with which he works. One method of recognizing motivationally oriented staff members is to give them important roles in the in-service development program.

10. <u>In-service development is an integral part of good student personnel administration</u>. While many divergent viewpoints and even strong disagreement exist regarding the role of student personnel work and the functions of student personnel administrators, there is almost unanimous agreement on one function; namely, that student personnel administrators are responsible for developing means for the constant improvement of their staff members. This is based upon the truism that static programs will not suffice with changing student bodies in a constantly changing society. The demands made upon individual students and upon colleges call for broader and more diversified methods of working with students. This is further reinforced by the fact that the college enrollment year-by-year includes students from a broader range of socio-economic levels than previously have attended college. The need for staff upgrading is further emphasized due to the great strides being constantly made in man's knowledge

concerning human behavior, learning processes, leadership, maturity, and problem-solving methodology.

Effective personnel administrators plan on the bases of these factors and devise methods of keeping the staff abreast of the developments. Without this projection on any planned basis, it would be impossible to effectively meet the challenges facing the personnel administrator in his on-going program.

Good student personnel administration also is organized in such a way that decision making is carried out at the broadest possible level commensurate with the difficulty of the situation in which the decision has to be made.

Conclusion

Communication problems on college campuses today are characterized by unlimited impossibilities. Special attention by student personnel administrators needs to be given to the fact that college campuses have fragmentized into subgroups, each with its own value system. These groups tend to support the contention that college campuses are in reality cities of students, faculty and administrative persons with fewer and fewer general purposes and more and more specialized interests and goals.

Another factor which has complicated college life at all levels centers around the fact that man's knowledge is doubling every eight or ten years. This impact of knowledge has great consequences for the present-day student with new curricula and breakthroughs in old areas of knowledge - in fact, almost a complete revolution in many fields of knowledge during the short span of a student's college career. This bombardment of knowledge and the complexity of society have educators trying frantically to change and add to curriculum in an effort to reduce this complexity to a teachable form in classroom instruction.

Methods also are being devised which will provide students with realistic experiences during the college years. Student personnel administrators have great responsibility for furnishing leadership in this endeavor. While a number of student personnel services have important contributions to make in this role, student personnel administrators can partially achieve this function by

the creation of in-service development programs.

The in-service development program is an organized means designed with comprehensiveness and flexibility to reduce the institution's philosophy to workable programs which will transform the college campus into an educational laboratory for student experiences. To do otherwise would contribute to the fragmentation of student experiences and further impede integrative learning processes.

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